

# The Builder.

No. CCCXXI.

SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1849.



**M**ATTERS artistic are taking their place before the public: the works done quietly in lone rooms, with Hope for a stimulator and support, are being gathered together into the public places for commendation or sneer, sale or neglect. The harvest of the year is to be gathered. May the weather be fair for all, and the sun shine brightly on the deserving! Those who know best at what cost of time and labour art is attained, will the least willingly condemn, the most readily encourage. They will not expect to find a Michaelangelo or a Raffaele in every striver after the beautiful; nor will they compare the works of the year of any set of men, with galleries of ancient art,—selected specimens of many masters from the works of many years.

On Monday, the *Association for Promoting the Free Exhibition of Modern Art*, opened their gallery. It contains 531 works of art, of which 15 only have been exhibited before, and is far superior, as a whole, to the collection in the same place last year.

At the private view on Saturday the attendance of visitors was very numerous, including many distinguished names, and eighteen pictures were purchased, being more, as we understand, than were sold there during the whole of last season, leaving out the sales to the Art-Union of London. The attendance of visitors since has been much better than it was last year, and will doubtless increase as the collection becomes known.

Nos. 6 and 7, "On the Trent," and "A Willow Stream that turns a Mill," are two nice landscapes, by F. W. Hulme, at present better known by his excellent drawings on wood than by his pictures. No. 14, "Morning Prayers," by Marshall Claxton, is more to our fancy than some larger works by the same artist. The well fed, pompous hand seen at one corner of the picture, in the curtained pew, contrasts cleverly with the meek slight girls at their devotions in the "free-seat." In No. 23 E. H. Corbould gives a possible view of "The Old Hostellerie, High-road, Knightsbridge, A.D. 1497 (formerly called Kynges-Brygg, or King's-bridge, but more commonly known as Stone-bridge)." The dwellers in that pleasant suburb will scarcely recognise "the Green," now disgracefully disfigured by mud heaps, zinc cows, and what looks like a very ugly ware-house or stable, but is in reality a free school, where young minds may be educated by externals (and how strong they are we all know), into due contempt of decency, order, and symmetry. No. 48, "Rugged Pastures," is by S. R. Percy, and has much excellence. The same artist exhibits five other landscapes, all possessing more or less merit.

55, "Christ teaching Humility," a finished study for a large picture, by R. S. Lander, R.S.A., is one of the finest works in the gallery, and is calculated to raise the artist's reputation very considerably. It represents that incident in the life of the Saviour, when, in reply to the question, "who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" he exhorted his disciples to become as little children. This

picture alone would justify a visit to the gallery. No. 76, "Poggio Bracciolini discovering ancient Manuscripts," by D. W. Deane, has excellent qualities, which are still further displayed in 367, "Tasso reading his poems to Leonora D'Este," and 376, "Margaret prophesies the death of Richard III.," by the same painter.

No. 82, "King Lear," by Ford Maddox Brown, is a very remarkable work, and entitles Mr. Brown to a high place in the list of British artists. It is full of thought, and in finish, a perfect marvel. Mrs. M'lan's "Soldiers' Wives waiting the result of a Battle," No. 92, should be published by the Peace Society: it is a touching scene, charmingly rendered. No. 100, "Highland Girls winnowing Corn, Fort William, Lochaber," is a pretty picture, by R. R. M'lan.

J. E. Lauder exhibits two pictures, "Yorick and the Grisette,—the Pulse" (No. 103), and "Columbus" (275), which are both of great excellence. 146, "Kilns at Alfreton, Middleton Dale, Derbyshire," and 216, "Bonsall Dale, Derbyshire," are two of the best out of a number of very powerful landscapes by Niemann. If Mr. Niemann avoid falling from boldness into coarseness, he will not fail to make for himself a good reputation.

One of the best landscapes in the room is 106, "Lowering Weather,—Cader Iria," by Alfred W. Williams. This was bought by Mr. Creswick, A.R.A., showing a good feeling on the part of one connected with the Academy, which must be gratifying to the members of the association. 295, "Langdale Pikes, Westmoreland," by the same artist, is a delicious sunset amongst the hills, refreshing to the eyes of those locked in towns. No. 187 and 188 are two glittering views of the Eternal City, by W. Oliver. 200, "A Willow Bank," well painted by A. Gilbert. Mrs. Criddle, in 221, "Juliet," has a head full of deep feeling. Amongst the historical works will be noticed No. 290, "Claverhouse mortally wounded at Killiecrankie," by W. B. Johnstone, R.S.A., which although rather a picture of those who shot Claverhouse, than of Claverhouse himself, has a breadth and largeness about it which redeems some bad painting. 308, "A Highland Stronghold," by H. McCulloch, R.S.A., of whom Edinburgh is justly proud, is not quite so good as the picture exhibited here last year, but has all that truthfulness which distinguishes this artist's works. "Moss Dale Fell," by W. K. Briggs, is a clever piece of mountain scenery. 341, "Don Quixote preparing for his first achievement," by R. W. Bues, has much character. 260, "The Ascension of the Just," is earnest and well-intentioned, though defective in execution. 368, "The Girlhood of Mary, Virgin," by D. G. Rossetti, is in the manner of the early school, finished with extraordinary minuteness and displaying a high tone of mind. It is one of the most noticeable pictures in the gallery.

We must further mention J. D. Pasmore, W. and H. Barraud (who have several excellent works), Wingfield, Dukes, Elen, Bullock (his fruit is quite faultless, better than nature and almost as good as Lance), Desanges (whose works, with much theatricality, display a mastery over some peculiar effects of light), J. T. Houlton, J. Peel, and others.

The Exhibition of the *Society of British Artists* will open on Monday. We may say, in anticipation, that it will be found above its average degree of attractiveness. Although there are no particularly striking pictures

there are several of great merit, as, for example, Mr. Johnstone's "Mary at the Tomb," Mr. Anthony's "Lake of Killarney," and his "Round Tower" picture; Mr. Baxter's beautiful modelling and refined feeling for colour, as exemplified in his "Gipsy Heads," this year, and his admirable portrayal of childhood; Mr. Dobson's praiseworthy scriptural work; Mr. Harlstone's gorgeous "Lady looking into the Glass;" the "Fairie Queen" picture of Mr. Gale; the Dutch-like transcript of the Wilsons, and hosts of sunny corners and cool green shady spots, from the pencils of Pyne, Allen, Boddington, &c. A new name to London, West, of Clifton, a natural genius, contributes a picture remarkably faithful and beautiful, executed much after the style of Creswick. These, with a very good gipsy episode, skillfully rendered by Mr. Hill; some three or four embodiments of Mr. Woolmer's gay dreams; some good marine subjects by Mr. Brunning, a new member; with the works of Messrs. Clint, Tennant, Herring, Clater, and members generally, constitute the nucleus of a much better collection than usual.

Most of our readers will be glad to hear that the *Free Architectural Exhibition* has hitherto more than realised the anticipations of the projectors, the number of visitors having just prior to the extremely cold weather reached to 560 and 670 in the day. His Royal Highness Prince Albert has honoured the association with a visit; and amongst other distinguished visitors have been the Marquis of Northampton, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Cardigan, and others. It remains open until the 5th April,—so that there is yet time for those of our readers who have not seen the exhibition to visit it.

The subscription list of the *Art-Union of London*, will be open just long enough after the issue of our present number, to enable such of our readers to add their names to it as have up to this time postponed doing so. We may mention, as news, that the council proposes to electotype the two rewarded bas-reliefs, and to issue a certain number of copies of them in bronze as prizes. This is an excellent step.

The illustrated edition of "*L'Allegro*," having been very successful, the council determined on illustrating Goldsmith's "*Traveller*," and issuing it to all the subscribers. Amongst the artists who have already accepted commissions for this purpose, are T. Webster, R. A., J. Absolon, W. L. Leitch, W. E. Frost, A. R. A., C. Stanfield, R. A., E. H. Wehnert, R. Huskisson, Fk. Taylor, J. Gilbert, E. Corbould, R. Asdell, and E. M. Ward, A. R. A.

The Art-Union of London has done good service and will do more.

## ROYAL INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS.

At a meeting held on the 19th inst. Mr. Ambrose Poynter, V. P., in the chair, a letter was read from Mr. B. Ferrey, giving a sketch of the life of the late Mr. Miles, an associate of the Institute, who died recently at the early age of thirty-two years.

In May, 1841, Mr. Miles left England for Hamburg, travelled through Bavaria to Italy, stayed in Rome till December, went to Sicily, Greece, Constantinople, and returned to Rome. He returned through Germany to England in 1842. During the whole of this time he occupied himself most industriously, in taking sketches and measurements of the interesting buildings that came in his way. He devoted himself more particularly, however, to the collecting of such details as might be valuable to him to consult in the prosecution of his future practice, knowing that many exquisite pictorial representations of the most celebrated